



Hon. Doris O. Matsui

Member of Congress

Doris O. Matsui

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Serving California's 5th District

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STATEMENT OF CONGRESSWOMAN MATSUI ON HURRICANE KATRINA

Washington, DC – Congresswoman Doris O. Matsui (CA-5) issued the following statement on Hurricane Katrina:

“Our thoughts and prayers are with the people of New Orleans and all the other Gulf Coast residents affected by this horrific disaster. As a nation we have watched with horror as the city of New Orleans has faced Hurricane Katrina and been overtaken by the waters of Lake Ponchartrain. We have seen the heart-wrenching stories that restore your faith, but sadly we have also seen the opposite.

“Lives have been interrupted. Families separated. And many now face an uncertain future of trying to locate family and friends as well as begin to rebuild their lives, many from scratch. With the victims dispersed across this nation, when this can begin is not known. The full impact of Hurricane Katrina – emotionally, physically and financially – will not be known for years and more realistically decades.

“It is during tragedies like this, that we must come together as Americans to help our fellow citizens in their time of need. I would like to take this opportunity to praise the hundreds of Americans who are working day and night to help rescue and bring relief to the thousand people trapped in the effected area.

“From the start, the American people have again shown their unity of spirit and their willingness to aid those in the midst of this devastation. And these are not only professional rescue personnel but simply kind hearted neighbors who may have a boat, or some extra water or blankets and are scouring the area looking for survivors. I cannot imagine the difficulties they are facing and the sacrifices they have made to help their fellow Americans. I thank them for all their efforts and pray that they remain safe themselves and return home to their families.

“I commend the generosity of the American people, including my home town of Sacramento, which because of its location at the confluence of the American and Sacramento Rivers has a unique understanding of being a flood threatened city. I am proud of their generosity and extension of assistance – sending its firefighters, renowned search and rescue teams and opening its doors to hundreds of victims of Hurricane Katrina who are unable to return to their homes. Their efforts to restore a sense of normalcy for those who have been so up-rooted are a testament to them.

“I also share the frustration of so many with the early response of our government to this crisis. While the conditions under which the relief workers are functioning are catastrophic we can and must do better. Our primary focus must be on getting to those who are still stranded and need immediate assistance. Once that is accomplished I feel strongly that Congress must take a critical look at this response effort.



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"This is a moment of national sorrow. Sorrow at not preventing the preventable and sorrow for the tragic circumstances that came to be. Yet it is also a moment of national unity that is truly heart-warming.

"Again Mr. Speaker I send my thoughts and prayers to all those affected by Hurricane Katrina and I thank all those brave and generous Americans who are working to bring assistance and relief to the region. The out pouring of generosity from Americans across the country can make us all proud."

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